(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) At present, there are resident Indian Embasses/High Commissions in 114 member countries of the United Nations (UN). In addition, 84 countries where there are no resident Indian Missions, the bilateral relations of these countries with India are looked after by neighbouring resident Indian Missions on the basis of concurrent accreditation or other arrangements.

The Government initiates proposals for opening resident Indian Missions/ Posts based on the overall assessment of India's interests in the region and the foreign country concerned. The Government of India also receives proposals to open resident Indian Missions from time-to-time from countries where there are no resident Missions. The opening of resident Indian Missions is also guided by available human and financial resources of the Ministry. All decisions to open resident Indian Missions are taken with the approval of the highest authority in the Government.

As part of an ongoing process of opening resident Indian Missions, the Government recently re-opened a resident Indian Mission in Afghanistan, Consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad, and new Consulates in Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif, and new Consulates in Mandalay (Myanmar) and Birgunj (Nepal) during the last three years.

Items reserved for SSIs

†*137. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to continuous reduction in the reservation list by Government, the manufacturing of only 675 items now remain in the reservation list of small industries; and

(b) if not, the number of these items and the names of these 675 items which can be manufactured only by small scale industries in the country?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The number of items (675) hitherto reserved for manufacture by the small scale industries has now been reduced to 605 (list of items enclosed at Annexure-"I"). [*See* Appendix 203 Annexure No.8]

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

by excluding 85 items (including 15 sub-items which did not have independent serial numbers attached to them in the last reservation list) under Government notification S.O. 1169(E) dated 20th October, 2004 (copy enclosed at Annexure "II" [*See* Appendix 203 Annexure No. 8]).

Special category status to Orissa

*138. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that High Court of Orissa has directed the Centre to consider the request of the Government of Orissa for grant of special category status to the State;

(b) whether it is also a fact that many States such as Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and North-Eastern States have developd after they were granted special status; and

(c) if so, what is hindering the process for grant of this status to Orissa and the time-frame within which this would now be granted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The development of a State is dependent on mobilization of State's own resources, public and private investment, optimal utilization of inflows, efficient implementation of projects, etc. The North-Eastern States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura are among the 11 States which have been granted special category status.

(c) NDC has not approved grant of special category status to Orissa because it does not fulfil the criteria specified for the purpose of granting special category status which include; strategic location on the border with neighbouring countries, hilly terrain, inadequate economic and social infrastructure, predominantly large tribal population and limited weak resource base compared to development needs.